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LOS ANGELES COUNTY HOMEOWNERS NOW ELIGIBLE FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY REBATES AND INCENTIVES

Energy Upgrade California Seeks to Retrofit Thousands of Homes, Create 2,000 Green Jobs in Los Angeles County

LOS ANGELES - March 1, 2011 - Homeowners in Los Angeles County can now qualify for rebates and financial incentives of up to \$4,500, and save money on their monthly utility bills by implementing energy-saving upgrades to their homes as part of a new program called Energy Upgrade California. An unprecedented collaboration among federal, state and local governments as well as regional utilities, Energy Upgrade California in Los Angeles County expects to retrofit up to 18,000 homes with an average 20 percent reduction in energy use, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create about 2,000 new green jobs in Los Angeles County. The program will ultimately eliminate about 20,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide greenhouse gas emissions -the air quality improvement equivalent of planting approximately half a million trees.

Energy Upgrade home improvements that qualify for rebates and incentives include insulation, sealing, HVAC upgrades, energy-efficient windows, tankless water heaters and other "fixed" improvements. The program emphasizes a "whole house" approach, rather than installing individual improvements, as the most efficient and effective way to save money on energy bills and qualify for the maximum rebate available.

"One-time home improvements like these are a great way for homeowners to save money now with the prospect of rebates, and make a smart, long-term financial investment," said Howard Choy, General Manager of the County Office of Sustainability. "In addition to the energy cost savings benefits, these upgrades make homes more comfortable to live in, improve indoor air quality, and can increase property values."

To be eligible for the rebates and incentives, the work must be performed by an Energy Upgrade California participating contractor. For the past six months, the Energy Upgrade California in Los Angeles County team has been working to recruit qualified contractors, educate them about the program and provide workshops and trainings. All contractors participating in the program undergo a training program before performing home energy upgrades, and are part of an ongoing quality control and quality assurance program. Homeowners will be directed to the list of participating contractors specially trained in energy efficient upgrades, and participating contractors will benefit from a pipeline of referrals and interested customers.

“The incentives offered by the program will drive demand for home energy efficiency upgrades, offering local contractors the opportunity to increase their customer base and bring additional money-saving energy upgrade services to current clients,” said Choy. “This program is an example of how job creation and environmental protection can work hand-in-hand, and provide significant financial benefits to the homeowners of L.A. County.”

Energy Upgrade California in Los Angeles County is also launching a Home Energy Makeover Contest, in which homeowners across the county can win a home energy upgrade. Twenty semi-finalists will receive free home energy assessments, five winners will receive free home energy upgrades worth an estimated \$10,000 each, and a sixth, grand prize winner will receive a Toward Net Zero Energy Upgrade, which may include solar panels and be worth an estimated \$50,000. The program is now accepting entries at www.EnergyUpgradeCA.org/LAHomeMakeover.

“Encouraging and incentivizing homeowners to embrace energy efficiency at a county-wide level is a powerful example of how public and private agencies can work together to create positive change across multiple sectors,” said Choy. “With an unemployment rate of 12.5 percent, Los Angeles needs the jobs that demand for these upgrades will create and, with 20 percent of destructive greenhouse gas emissions generated by the energy used in homes, energy upgrades can have an immediate and positive impact on our county’s environmental footprint.”

“Southern California Edison is always looking for ways to partner with our customers to save energy, save money, and help the environment. The Energy Upgrade program does all three while simultaneously supporting the development of contractors who are able to meet the demand for these energy-saving upgrades,” said Gene Rodrigues, Southern California Edison’s director of Energy Efficiency and Customer Solar. “We’re pleased to be able to work with Los Angeles County to provide this program, which provides immediate benefits and long-term payback for customers and contractors alike.”

“Southern California Gas Company is proud to offer our customers the Energy Upgrade California program to help them achieve optimal energy savings now and in the future,” said Mark Gaines, director of customer programs for Southern California Gas Company. “We’re always looking for ways to help our customers save money, protect the environment and use natural resources wisely. Our collaboration with Los Angeles County and numerous contractors is an important part of our dedication in supporting the state’s energy policy of meeting California’s energy growth needs by prioritizing energy conservation and resource efficiency.”

Energy Upgrade California incentives and rebates will vary in the cities of Los Angeles, Pasadena, Glendale, Burbank, Long Beach, Vernon and Azusa; however, the utilities serving those cities are developing their Energy Upgrade programs for 2011 and some utility energy efficiency retrofit rebates/incentives are available. For residents of the City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power and Southern California Gas Company will provide a local rebate/incentive for some home energy upgrades. For more information about rebates and incentives currently available to residents served by the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power, please contact 1-800-DIAL-DWP (1-800-342-5397) or Southern California Gas Company at 1-800-427-2200.

About Energy Upgrade California in Los Angeles County

Energy Upgrade California is a state-wide energy efficiency program for homeowners and a collaboration among the California Energy Commission, the California Public Utilities Commission, utilities, local governments and the private sector. Funding for the Energy Upgrade California program comes from multiple American Reinvestment and Recovery Act sources, including: Los Angeles County's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant; U.S. Department of Energy's Better Buildings Program funding; and a California Energy Commission discretionary grant. Energy Upgrade California in Los Angeles County is administered and overseen by an alliance among L.A. County, Southern California Edison, Southern California Gas Company and the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. Los Angeles County is one of the first counties in California to roll out this program. Locally, county officials are coordinating with the utilities to provide homeowners with information on home upgrade benefits, financing, incentives and home energy ratings, and help with finding participating contractors. For more information, consumers can visit www.EnergyUpgradeCA.org or call (877)785-2237.

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